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land. Finally it should be pointed out that the City of Glasgow Improvement Act reached the statute book in 1866—and not 1864; that its powers were somewhat different from those of the 1864 Liverpool statute (p. 51); and that “Hibernian” is not an acceptable synonym for Scottish (p. ix), to the vast majority of inhabitants living north of Hadrian’s Wall! These, however, are small drawbacks in a work which places the urban historian in the debt of Dr Sutcliffe and his co-authors.

University of Strathclyde

J. H. TREBLE

A. E. MUSSON. *Trade Union and Social History*. (London: Frank Cass. 1974. Pp. ix + 211. £4.25.)

The book draws together previously published essays on a variety of subjects, the greater part concerned with aspects of trade-union history. It opens, appropriately, with a warning of the special hazards which beset historians in this field, and particularly the temptation to make subjective interpretations in terms of class movements. The unions have always been and remain by nature sectional interests, conservative in their attitudes, distrustful of outside interference from whatever quarter—including the TUC—and suspicious of political ideologies, not least socialism. This theme is elaborated in the analysis of the formative phase of trade union development in the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century and mild strictures are passed on the Webbs and left-wing historians who exploit misleading labels such as “New Model” and “labour aristocracy” to the point of deliberately obscuring the fundamental continuity of trade-union growth. It is, however, difficult to strike a balance: if, as Prof. Musson rightly says, there was nothing really new in “New Model” unionism, the same could be said of the “New”, associated with the next stage of evolution. Nevertheless the terms can be justified, if cautiously used, to identify changes of degree rather than of kind.

The author is at his best following his own premise that, being so diverse in its constituents, trade unionism does not lend itself to facile generalizations but needs detailed investigation. His two studies of early organization of employees and employers in the printing industry are admirable. The reader may feel at this point that the arrangement of chapters seems rather inconsequential: these two should surely have preceded his well-known account of the foundation of the TUC, while his assessment of trends in modern trade unionism would have neatly rounded off the grouping. This last is a valuable exposé of the strengths and frailties of union organization, rather weakly up-dated to 1972; a paper on the subject “originally composed in the 1950’s” obviously requires a great deal more than “slight subsequent revision”.

The final chapters, on the struggle for a free press, the beginnings of co-operation in the industrial north, and the abuses of child labour, are useful contributions in a rather different genre to the social history of the age.

University of Dundee

D. F. MACDONALD

KENNETH D. BROWN (Ed.). *Essays in Anti-Labour History: Responses to the Rise of Labour in Britain*. (London: Macmillan. 1974. Pp. vii + 409. £10.)

After two general elections in 1974, in an atmosphere thick with talk of confrontation, coalitions, and anti-socialist declamations, this book has a remarkably contemporary

flavour. But it is concerned with earlier reactions to the rise of trade unions, socialism, and the Labour Party in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and it is not, as the title suggests, a polemical "anti-Labour" broadside, but a collection of scholarly studies into the responses of the established political parties and propertied classes to these threatening new developments. Indeed the authors are not at all inhibited from making criticisms of Labour's opponents, and these studies are in general very judicious and well balanced.

The editor, Dr Kenneth Brown, has brought together a team of scholars well qualified in this field and their various contributions combine admirably. They fall into two broad groups, concerned firstly with Liberal responses and secondly with more conservative reactions. In general, the deepest fears were anti-Socialist rather than anti-Labour—fears of state control and threats to liberty and property—but the growing "tyranny" of trade unions also caused serious concern. At first, in the period before the First World War, the "New Liberalism" of such as C. F. G. Masterman seemed to offer hopes, as Edward David shows, of an alternative radical philosophy to that of Labour, especially when, as Dr Douglas argues, the Labour Party was in decline in the years immediately before 1914. Mr Wrigley's study of the local political situation in Battersea, however, demonstrates that in this predominantly working-class constituency the Liberal position was only precariously maintained in that period, on the basis of a Lib-Lab "progressive" alliance, and it collapsed completely after the war. Dr Morgan, on the other hand, shows that in Wales traditional Liberalism remained overwhelmingly predominant until 1914, but then steadily declined. Perhaps there is too much emphasis in these studies upon the particular and the personal, and too little upon the basic socio-economic class divisions, previously emphasized by other scholars such as Dr Pelling and Dr Emy, already evident and undermining the Liberal position in the decades before 1914.

Stronger opposition to the rise of Labour and socialist collectivism naturally come from more conservative sources. Lord Elcho, as portrayed by Prof. Kauffman, typifies the staunch anti-trade union, anti-socialist elements in later nineteenth-century capitalist society; he was influential in founding the Liberty and Property Defence League, which Prof. Seldon reveals as the spearhead of the employers' counter-attack. A rather more constructive attitude was adopted by the Anti-Socialist Union, which, as Dr Brown shows, saw the need for social reform as an alternative to socialism, though without achieving any very positive programme. Co-partnership and profit-sharing schemes, as Prof. Bristow demonstrates, generally met with trade-union hostility and failed to prevent labour unrest; many of them undoubtedly had ulterior anti-union motives. At the same time the Charity Organisation Society, and notably Thomas MacKay (as Mr Mason shows), also supported the virtues of individualism, self-help, and private enterprise, against state provision for unemployment and poverty. W. H. Mallock, the subject of Mr Ford's final chapter, was the most outstanding champion of individualism in that period, attacking the "monstrous fallacy" of Marx's theory of labour value and emphasizing the wealth-creating role of capitalist entrepreneurs, whose energy and enterprise, managerial and inventive ability, had so much improved material conditions for the whole of society; as against Marx's theory of ultimately classless society and withering away of the state, he argued that socialism would actually result in bureaucratic oligarchy, authoritarian centralized government, and loss of individual liberty, while competitive free enterprise would be replaced by inefficient state monopoly.

These individuals and organizations have tended to be neglected by historians. Some of their views may now seem outdated and reactionary: they showed, for example, little appreciation of involuntary economic and social causes of poverty and displayed

an almost pathological opposition to state welfare schemes. But in many ways they reflect widespread and deep-rooted attitudes in British society, which have strongly persisted and still persuade the majority of voters in this country to vote Conservative or Liberal. As Dr Brown therefore rightly observes, they deserve to be examined.

University of Manchester

A. E. MUSSON

E. L. TAPLIN. *Liverpool Dockers and Seamen, 1870-1890*. (Hull: University of Hull Publications. 1974. Pp. viii + 96. £2.)

Problems of trade-union emergence remain an important field of inquiry for labour historians. While American writers have been more confident in coming forward with explicit theoretical schema to explain union growth, British researchers continue to present challenging monographic evidence stressing the complex inter-action of economic, social, and cultural influences involved. Eric Taplin's valuable survey of waterfront unionism on Merseyside in the late nineteenth century is a useful contribution in this latter tradition. The author grapples reasonably convincingly with the local configuration of unifying and divisive factors underlying the genesis of permanent waterside unionism between 1870 and 1890, providing yet another reminder of the pre-1889 origins of unskilled unionism. While paying due attention to economic conditions in the shipping industry and the impact of cyclical fluctuations on the timing of industrial unrest, this study is particularly interesting in its discussion of changing forms of popular waterfront leadership as an aspect of union growth. The twenty-year time-span of the book is nonetheless unduly constricting. Problems of organizational consolidation and union recognition extended well beyond 1890 in the face of employer hostility and persistent sectionalism amongst the dockland labour force. After reading this survey, one is still left wondering in what *practical* ways trade unionism had come to stay by 1890. In terms of union recognition and collective bargaining rather than institutional origins, the watershed looks more like 1911. Until Taplin provides us with his history of the National Union of Dock Labourers, it will not be easy to tell.

University of Glasgow

R. J. HOLTON

PAMELA and HAROLD SILVER. *The Education of the Poor; the History of a National School, 1824-1974*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1974. Pp. x + 197. £3.95.)

The creation of modern mass literacy in England was largely achieved between the 1820's and the 1880's. The most important contribution to this achievement was made not by the Board schools after 1870 but by the monumental work of the voluntary, and chiefly the Anglican National Society, schools in the preceding two generations. The National Society has its own histories but much rarer are scholarly histories of individual National schools and their response to social change and educational policy. Using the unusually vast archives of St Marks, Kennington, Dr and Mrs Silver now provide us with a well-researched, entertaining, and illuminating study of such a school which has survived to this day.

The two schools were opened in 1824 and 1825, one for boys and one for girls. They were a response to the rising population of the area engaged in the market-gardening, bricks, and vitriol manufacture and the riverside industries of Kennington and the